
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
December 7, 2010
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall Council Chambers, on **Tuesday, December 7, 2010**, at **7:00 p.m.**

Council members present: Mayor Robert Aswell, Councilman Dennis Paschal, Mayor Pro Tem James Belcher, Councilwoman Iris Powell, and Councilwoman Evelyn Conner

A quorum was present.

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Administrator - Town Clerk
Fred Baggett, Town Attorney / Yvonne Russell, Finance Officer, and Deputy Clarence Cheshire

Article I. Mayor Aswell called the December 7th, 2010, Wentworth Town Council Meeting to order.

Article II. Mayor Pro Tem James Belcher gave the **Invocation.**

Article III. **Approval of December Agenda**

A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Aswell advised that **Richard Capps**, Chairman of the Recreation Committee, signed the Speaker Register, and added, *“We can add him under Item C of New Business, and we also need to amend the Agenda to add Item I—Consideration of Purchasing a Fir Tree for the Front Lawn of the Town Hall.”*

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, *“That the Agenda be amended and approved as stated.”*

Councilwoman Powell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article IV. **Approval of Minutes**

A. Town Council Meeting: November 4, 2010

Councilman Paschal made a motion to, *“Approve the Minutes as written.”*

Town Clerk, **Brenda Ward**, said she would like to mention a correction to the Minutes.

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Councilwoman Conner said, “Yes, there is one on Page 6, where reference is made to *Mayor Paschal*.” (It should be *Councilman Paschal*.)

Ms. Ward added, “And the correction I was talking about is on the last page. Reference was made to Councilwoman *Paschal* and it should be *Powell*. So, we will make those two corrections, if you would include that in your motion.”

Councilman Paschal then made a motion, “*To approve the Minutes as corrected.*”

Councilwoman Conner seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article V. Old Business

Mayor Aswell advised that there was no Old Business for discussion.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Appointment of Town Council Delegate to the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments for 2011

Mayor Aswell advised that he is the current delegate.

The Town Administrator added, “You have the option of electing a delegate each year. The delegate you select votes on your behalf on matters that come before the COG at their meetings, and Robert can continue unless someone else is interested.”

There were no comments from Council, and **Mayor Aswell** said, “I will entertain a motion either way.”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, “*That we continue to allow Mayor Aswell to serve as our delegate to the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments for 2011.*”

Councilman Paschal seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

B. Consideration of Reappointment of Harold Vaden as the Town’s Representative to the Rockingham County Partnership for Economic Development (Executive Board)

The Town Administrator advised Council, “Mr. Vaden agreed to be reappointed if you are okay with that.”

Councilwoman Powell made a motion, “*That he be reappointed.*”

Councilwoman Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

C. Consideration of Appointments to Town Boards and Committees

1. Recreation Committee

- * (a) Richard Capps 3-year term
- * (b) Bonnie Dickens 3-year term
- * Reappointments

Mayor Aswell recognized **Richard Capps** who signed the Speaker Register to address Council.

Mr. Capps thanked Council, “...for all that you do and for allowing me the opportunity to volunteer my time to help make this a wonderful town to be in. To give you a quick update as to what is going on with the Recreation Committee, one of the things about the people on our committee is that we have a pretty active group who are involved in many other activities. It is good to see Mrs. Butler here tonight. She is very active in several other things going on in our community and was a big help to the Rec. Committee.”

Mr. Capps continued, “We have taken a few months off and haven’t had a meeting. Mr. Scott is now the principal at Community Baptist School and had his hands full there. I coached Wentworth football, and just want to let you know that we represented the Town well, and won the championship in Pee Wee football. Any recognition we can bring to the Town is always a positive, we hope.”

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Mr. Capps added, "I also want to thank you for including recreation in your budget by setting up the Capital Reserve Fund for future recreational grounds/facilities. It is a tough economy that we are in and a lot of things going on that we wish were different, but it is good to stay positive and stay focused, and we want to continue working toward some goals that we have as a committee."

"As you know, we had our first community-wide event this Spring, and it was what I consider to be a success. Any time you get more than ten people to show up for something that is new, it's a success. I think we did a little bit better than break even, but at least we brought some recognition to the new Town Hall and to the Rec. Committee, and we ended up picking a warm, but windy day, but we had a good time."

Mr. Capps concluded, "Again, I just want to thank you all for what you're doing and for having the foresight to recognize that there are recreational needs in this community for both the old and the young, and that it is good for us to come together for things when we can."

Mayor Aswell commented, "We would also like to thank the Recreation Committee for the things they have done this year."

Mayor Aswell then asked Council to consider appointing Mr. Capps and Bonnie Dickens for three-year terms on the Recreation Committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher made a motion, "*That we accept both of these reappointments for the Recreation Committee.*"

Councilwoman Conner seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

C. Consideration of Appointments to Town Boards and Committees

2. Appearance Committee

* (a) Sue Aswell 3-year term

* Reappointment

Mayor Aswell asked for a motion concerning the appointment to the Appearance Committee.

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Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said he thought Mrs. Aswell had been doing a good job on the Appearance Committee and that if she was willing to be reappointed, he would like to make a motion, *“That we reappoint Mrs. Sue Aswell to the Appearance Committee.”*

Councilwoman Powell seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS - Continued

C. Consideration of Appointments to Town Boards and Committees

3. Planning Board

**Susan Hall (Alternate)
149 Hall Farm Road**

Mayor Aswell referred Council to an application from Susan Hall for the Wentworth Planning Board. He said the Town Administrator advised that currently there are no vacancies on the Planning Board, and that there are three alternates. He noted that Mrs. Hall indicated her second preference would be to serve on the Historic Preservation Committee.

Councilman Paschal asked the Town Administrator how many people are on the Historic Preservation Committee.

Mrs. Ward replied, “We did have three people, but one of them resigned and the others just haven’t been very active. However, I have a couple of people who have expressed an interest in this committee, so it would be good to add Mrs. Hall as well.”

Mayor Aswell made a motion, *“That we appoint Susan Hall to the Historic Preservation Committee.”*

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher seconded the motion and suggested that it be communicated to Mrs. Hall, “that we really don’t need anyone on the Planning Board at this time, but that we appreciate her interest and will be happy to consider her if an opening occurs and if she is still interested.”

Councilwoman Conner said, “I think we need to contact her first to see if she will accept this, a three-year term?”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said, “But she selected this as her second choice.”

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The **Town Administrator** commented, “I always send the Bylaws, which gives the terms, when I send an application. You are just making the appointments tonight, and anyone could resign from the committee at any time anyway, if they wanted to, but I will let her know that it is a three-year term.”

There was no further discussion.

Mayor Aswell asked for a vote. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

C. Consideration of Appointments to Town Boards and Committees

4. Historic Preservation Committee

(These Minutes reflect that Susan Hall was appointed to the Historic Preservation Committee for a three-year term.)

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

D. Update on the County Museum and Introduction of Kim Proctor, Director

- **Dr. Lindley Butler**
Rockingham County Historical Society, Museum, and Archives

Mayor Aswell invited **Dr. Lindley Butler** to address Council.

Dr. Butler thanked the Council and advised that Ms. Proctor would not be able to join him, because of car trouble on I-40 near Durham.

He continued, “I suppose you all know that she (Kim Proctor) is going to be your next door neighbor, so we will plan to have her here in January.”

“I also feel like I need to say something about the Historic Preservation Committee...I feel a little embarrassed about that...what happened is that Jerry Owens and I were on that committee, and then we got involved with the museum, and I think I told Brenda (Town Administrator), ‘That’s all we can do right now.’”

Dr. Butler continued, “I think if we get the museum, that will be a pretty big Historic Preservation project for the Town of Wentworth. But I am still embarrassed about the committee, but you have someone new on it now and it sounds like there are some more people who are interested. I know that when Kim gets settled in, she will want to be on that committee as well.”

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“Let me give you a little update...,” **Dr. Butler** said, “...one thing that’s been going on is our discussions with the county for about six months now, about the courthouse, and we are still not there yet...but you all have been there, too, and know what that’s like.” (Dr. Butler was referring to the Town’s efforts to lease the old Wentworth School from the County, to no avail.)

“We have a new board (County Commissioners), and we will probably be making a presentation to them in the next month or so. We feel like we have a good deal for them...using the old, old, jail and the courthouse for a museum, we feel that it will be important for the County in terms of teaching history, working with the schools, and bringing visitors to the county. We have pledged from the outset to raise the money to operate it and staff it, and we are right now raising the money for Kim Proctor’s position. We do have funds for it, but we are in a campaign...to raise that money and hope to have that done by the end of the year.”

Dr. Butler continued, “We got a challenge grant of \$25,000.00 a year for the next four years, and we have to match it. That’s what we are in the middle of right now, and I hope we are going to make it, so raising money will be one of the major things we will be doing.”

“Kim Proctor started with us in October, part time, and will be full-time on January 1st, so we have generated a position, a job...and she will be living in downtown...can’t be any more downtown Wentworth than next to the town hall. She is delighted to be here and be so close to her work place in the Wright Tavern. It’s a whole new ballgame for the Historical Society—a lot of work to be done, volunteer work. We are just having to rethink what we’ve been doing or not doing the last few years.”

“As for the Wright Tavern,” said **Dr. Butler**, “we are going to move ahead and reactivate the tavern, make it open to the public, starting with having it open 3 days a week and build a program, a living-history and interpretive program there for school groups and the public; and then we’re hoping we can add, sometime next year, the old courthouse and the jail. We’ll see how that works out.”

“I want to talk a little bit about Kim (museum director)...and again, you will see her next month. She’s a ball of fire, that’s all I can say. She just seems to have unlimited energy...we have so much that needs to be done, but we need to prioritize and decide what comes first. She will have it all laid out, and then two days later, something else needs attention.”

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“All I can say, is that she is working hard and really putting in full time hours on part-time pay. She is committed to the community and to the county, and is excited about it. I think we have found someone who is just right for the job. She has a history degree from UNC-G and was highly recommended by the head of the department over there. One of the most impressive things on her resumé, is that she has run her own business for more than a decade, managed 16 employees, and has all kinds of small business experience. The history part is covered, but we are fortunate to have someone with this business sense, as a manager. She has been in the work place and gone back to school for the history and museum studies.”

Dr. Butler added, “Brenda (Ward) has met her and knows that she is very personable, easy to get to know, and she is delighted, as I am, to have Elizabeth’s Pizza downtown, and the more business we get downtown, it’s going to create the kind of community we want.”

In conclusion, **Dr. Butler** read a letter addressed to Kim Proctor, Museum Director, advising of a donation to the Historical Society/Museum in honor of the Wentworth Town Council. The donation, in the amount of \$125.00, was made by the Town Administrator and Town Finance Officer.

Dr. Butler read, “It is in the spirit of the Christmas season that we honor our council and acknowledge their support of your organization’s effort to preserve our history.”

Dr. Butler thanked Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Russell for the donation to the museum saying, “It is a great gesture, and we appreciate it because we believe the museum will be an important institution for the Town.”

Councilwoman Powell, a member of the Historical Society, added, “Anyone can make donations to this, you know. We need to raise the money and everyone can help out.”

“Yes, we’re looking for members,” **Dr. Butler** added, “and we need help in raising the funds. I should have brought some applications by, but I really appreciate you having us and I’m sure that Kim will be here in January.”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said, “Thank you, Dr. Butler, and it would be a good idea for you to drop off some membership forms, so we can have them available at all times.”

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Mayor Aswell added, “Thank you for what you and Dr. Owens have done...you may not have kept the Historical Preservation Committee active, but we do appreciate all the work you’ve been doing during that time. I think the museum would be a good thing for the County and I hope you can convince the commissioners to go along with it.”

“We will do our best,” **Dr. Butler** replied.

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher said, “Actually, I would like to make a point to be at that meeting to speak in favor of it.”

“That would be good,” **Dr. Butler** said.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS

E. Consideration of Longevity Pay for Town Employees—Year Ending 2010

Mayor Aswell explained, “We voted some time back to enact the Longevity Pay Plan, and forgot to put it on the November Agenda, as we said we would review it each November.”

“I would like to make a motion *that we go ahead and give the employees the longevity pay that was voted on,*” **Mayor Aswell** said.

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

F. Consideration of Adoption of Town of Wentworth 2011 Holiday Closing Schedule

Mayor Aswell made a motion, “*That we adopt the 2011 Holiday Closing Schedule.*”

Councilwoman Powell seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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G. Last Minute Update on Christmas Parade

- Deputy Clarence Cheshire

Mayor Aswell asked Deputy Cheshire to update Council on the Christmas Parade.

Deputy Cheshire thanked Council for the opportunity to speak, saying he was, "...definitely a little bit prejudiced because I think this is going to be the best parade we have had thus far, because there will be something for everybody."

He advised that the Pink Heals (Pink Fire Truck for Promotion of Cancer Awareness) group is a new addition to the parade and that a meeting would be held at the Town Hall on Friday night before the Parade, at 7:00 p.m. He said the meeting will feature the Pink Heals fire personnel who will give a short power point presentation explaining how to form a chapter of the organization.

Deputy Cheshire said that many law enforcement and fire department personnel from all over the County have been invited and that Council members are also welcome to attend.

"We are also looking forward to having Susie and her owner, come to ride in the parade," said **Deputy Cheshire**. "We are putting last minute touches on everything, and hope that we're ready to roll."

He noted that there will be a professional float for Santa Claus, and that several merchants have rented a professional float to represent their businesses.

Deputy Cheshire advised that the three judges for this year's parade are "authentic district court judges".

He reminded council that they voted to give each marching entry a plaque and to do a cash prize to the best marching group, musical or non-musical.

Deputy Cheshire added, "One thing I would like to say to Council, Yvonne, and Brenda...I appreciate all of your support. For the last three years, you have pretty much let me take this thing and run with it. I have had more help from Brenda and Yvonne than you could know, and from y'all too, just standing behind me. I think of Wentworth as being my home and I enjoy being here and working here. I thank you for all you do for me and for what you allow me to do for the Town."

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Mayor Aswell said, “Clarence, I would like to thank you for all the work you have done the last three years, on the parade. We know you have put your heart and soul into it. It’s turned out real good the last two years and I’m sure this year will be even better.”

“I sure hope so,” said **Deputy Cheshire**.

H. “Thank You,” Deputy Cheshire

Mayor Aswell told Deputy Cheshire that Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Russell wanted to say a few words about him.

Mrs. Ward remarked, “Yes, we do. Clarence has been so good to work on these parades. You have no idea how much time he puts into them. He actually takes vacation the week before the parade and prior to that he makes calls and contacts on his own time. He doesn’t do this during his shift work for the Sheriff’s Department.”

“Deputy Cheshire is really great to work with. When we heard through the grapevine that the Sheriff was considering putting Clarence back on regular patrol, some of the council members let him know that we don’t want to lose Clarence. We want to keep him as our deputy in the Town of Wentworth.”

“So, we just want you to know, Clarence, that we do appreciate what you do for us, not only for the work on the parade, but for all that you do. We had a plaque made as an expression of our appreciation, and I’ll ask Yvonne if she will, to read it for everyone.”

Mrs. Russell read the inscription on the plaque as follows:

“IN HONOR AND APPRECIATION OF DEPUTY CLARENCE CHESHIRE, for your loyalty and service to the citizens of Wentworth, and for your dedication and leadership in the organization and success of the Town of Wentworth Christmas Parades. GRATEFULLY, WENTWORTH TOWN COUNCIL & STAFF, DECEMBER 7, 2010

Deputy Cheshire thanked everyone again, as Council and the audience applauded.

Article VI. NEW BUSINESS – Continued

I. Consideration of Purchasing a Fir Tree for the Front Lawn of the Town Hall

- Town Administrator, Brenda Ward

We have talked with our landscaper, Perennial Landscaping, about finding us a tree for the Town lawn, to be used for a possible Christmas tree lighting each year. We have had several people ask us about doing this as a regular tradition each year...Judy Wall was the most recent inquirer about this possibility, and I let her know that we were already looking into this.”

“I have provided some prices for you to consider, and if you approve this, the landscaper says he can get it planted right away. He can get a Blue Spruce, four to five feet in height, but they grow about a foot a year and grow to approximately 12-18 feet in height. The cost for that one is \$150.00, planted.”

“He can also get a *grafted* tree, called a Fat Albert tree for \$270.00 and it would be about five feet tall and grows to 10-12 feet in height.”

“We were thinking of planting it on the front lawn, in line with the sidewalk on the side of the building that borders the McCollum property...to the right of the flag pole (if you are facing the road).”

Councilwoman Powell asked, “You keep saying front lawn, what are you considering the front?”

The road frontage on NC 87,” replied **Mrs. Ward**.

Council talked about the varying heights and how many feet per year each one grows, when is the best time to plant, etc.

Mrs. Ward said the landscaper “...seemed to think that the Blue Spruce would be the best buy, but that he could get either one, locally, and get it planted before the parade if we wanted him to.”

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Mrs. Lee Templeton, Chairman of the Wentworth Planning Board, was present for the meeting and commented that she has a Fat Albert tree, "...which is really round and not exactly a good Christmas tree shape."

Councilman Paschal made a motion, *"That we get the Blue Spruce and plant it out here, roadside, next to the Town Hall."*

Councilwoman Conner seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

"Maybe next year, we will have a tree-lighting," said **Mrs. Ward**.

"We could have it the night before the parade," said **Councilwoman Conner**.

"Can I add something...I think we should do that. I make a motion...can I make a motion to do that?" asked **Councilwoman Conner**.

"Along with this?" asked **Mayor Aswell**.

"Yes, since we are purchasing the Blue Spruce, that on Friday night, we have an annual tree lighting before the Christmas Parade on Saturday morning," said **Councilwoman Conner**.

"That would be a good thing for the Recreation Committee to plan," **Mayor Pro Tem Belcher** said.

"We can always put that on the Agenda sometime next year," the **Town Clerk** suggested.

"Do you want to wait and put that on the January Agenda, Evelyn?" **Mayor Aswell** asked Councilwoman Conner.

"Whatever..." **Councilwoman Conner** replied.

"All I am saying is that we do it right as far as adding things to the Agenda, but he's the mayor, ask him. If he says it's okay, then go ahead," **Mrs. Ward** said.

Councilman Paschal asked Mayor Aswell, "Can we just make a motion under this item here...Item I?"

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“Yes, I guess so,” **Mayor Aswell** replied.

“Well, I guess Evelyn already made a motion,” said **Councilman Paschal**, so I second the motion.”

Mayor Aswell repeated, “*We have a motion and a second to have the tree-lighting ceremony starting next year on Friday night before the parade on Saturday.*”

All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Capps, who signed the Speaker Register, already addressed council. No one else signed up to speak.

Article VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The **2010 Wentworth Christmas Parade** is scheduled for **Saturday, December 11, 2010, at 11:00 a.m.**
- The next regular meeting of the **Wentworth Town Council** will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers on **Tuesday, January 4, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.**
- The next regular meeting of the **Town of Wentworth Planning Board** will be held in the Town Hall Council Chambers on **Tuesday, January 18, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.**
- The Friends of Wentworth invite everyone to “Christmas in Wentworth”, on **Friday, December 17, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.** at the WayCup Coffee Shop in the Wentworth Shopping Center.

Mayor Aswell invited everyone to stay after the meeting for refreshments.

Article X. ADJOURN

Mayor Aswell made a motion, “*That we adjourn the meeting.*”

Mayor Pro Tem Belcher seconded the motion. Everyone voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved By: _____

Robert P. Aswell, Mayor